

Instructions for Submitting a “Letter of Intent” under the General Authorization for Scientific Research

NMFS regulations under the MMPA at 50 CFR 216.45(b) require that General Authorization “Letters of Intent” contain the following information:

1. The name, address, telephone number, qualifications and experience of the applicant and any co-investigator(s) to be conducting the proposed research, and a curriculum vitae for each, including a list of publications by each such investigator relevant to the objectives, methodology, or other aspects of the proposed research.
2. The species or stocks of marine mammals (common and scientific names) that are the subject of the scientific research and any other species or stock of marine mammals that may be harassed during the conduct of the research.
3. The geographic location(s) in which the research is to be conducted, e.g., geographic name or lat./long.
4. The period(s) of time over which the research will be conducted (up to five years), including the field season(s) for the research, if applicable.
5. The purpose of the research, including a description of how the proposed research qualifies as “*bona fide* scientific research.”

(NOTE: The term “*bona fide* scientific research” is defined in section 216.3 of our regulations as “research on marine mammals conducted by qualified personnel, the results of which: (i) likely would be accepted for publication in a refereed scientific journal; (ii) are likely to contribute to the basic knowledge of marine mammal biology or ecology; or (iii) are likely to identify, evaluate, or resolve conservation problems.”)

6. The methods to be used to conduct the research.

(NOTE: NMFS may determine that specific proposed underwater research activities, such as photography and filming, may exceed Level B harassment. In these cases, the underwater research activities will not be authorized.)

7. The “Letter of Intent” must be signed, dated, and certified by the applicant as follows:

“In accordance with section 104(c)(3)(C) of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.) and implementing regulations (50 CFR part 216) I hereby notify the National Marine Fisheries Service of my intent to conduct research involving only Level B harassment on marine mammals in the wild, and request confirmation that the General Authorization for Level B Harassment for Scientific Research applies to the proposed research as described herein. I certify that the information in this letter of intent is complete, true, and correct to the best of my

knowledge and belief, and I understand that any false statement may subject me to the criminal penalties of 18 U.S.C. 1001, or penalties under the MMPA and implementing regulations. I acknowledge and accept that authority to conduct scientific research on marine mammals in the wild under the General Authorization is a limited conditional authority restricted to Level B harassment only, and that any other take of marine mammals, including the conduct of any activity that has the potential to injure marine mammals (i.e., Level A harassment), may subject me to penalties under the MMPA and implementing regulations.”

Please send original, signed General Authorization “Letters of Intent” to the following address:

Mr. Stephen L. Leathery
Chief, Permits Division, Conservation and Education Division
Office of Protected Resources
NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 713-2289